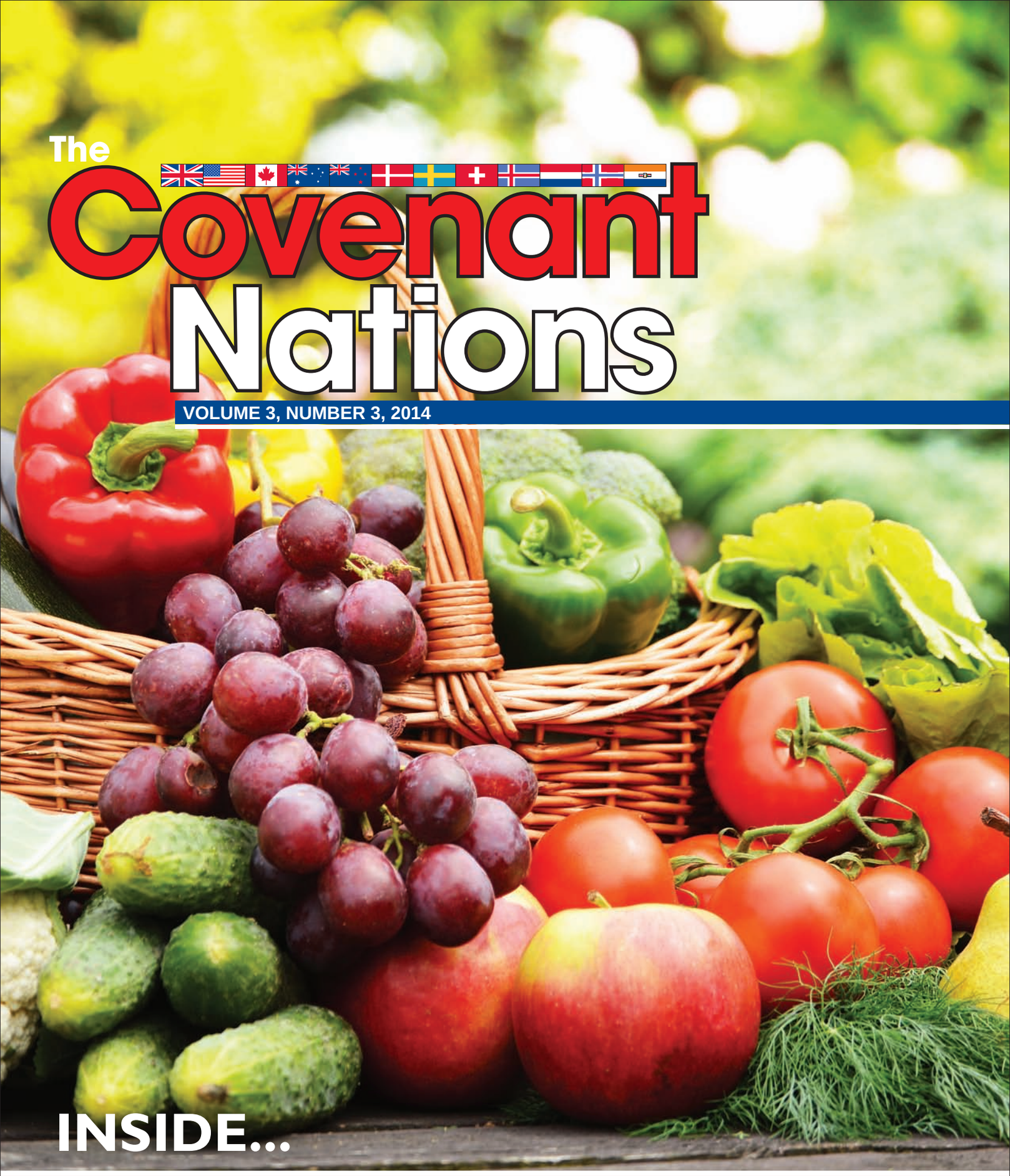

The Covenant Nations

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3, 2014

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THE GREENWICH MERIDIAN Page 11

▲ Invented in 1876 by the Scottish-born scientist and inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, the telephone was the beginning of the era of mass communication.

◄ COVER PICTURE:
The fruits of the harvest provided every year by the blessing of Almighty God.

Join us in the Great Cause to Wake Up God's Covenant Nations!

The Covenant Nations

Volume 3, Number 3 2014

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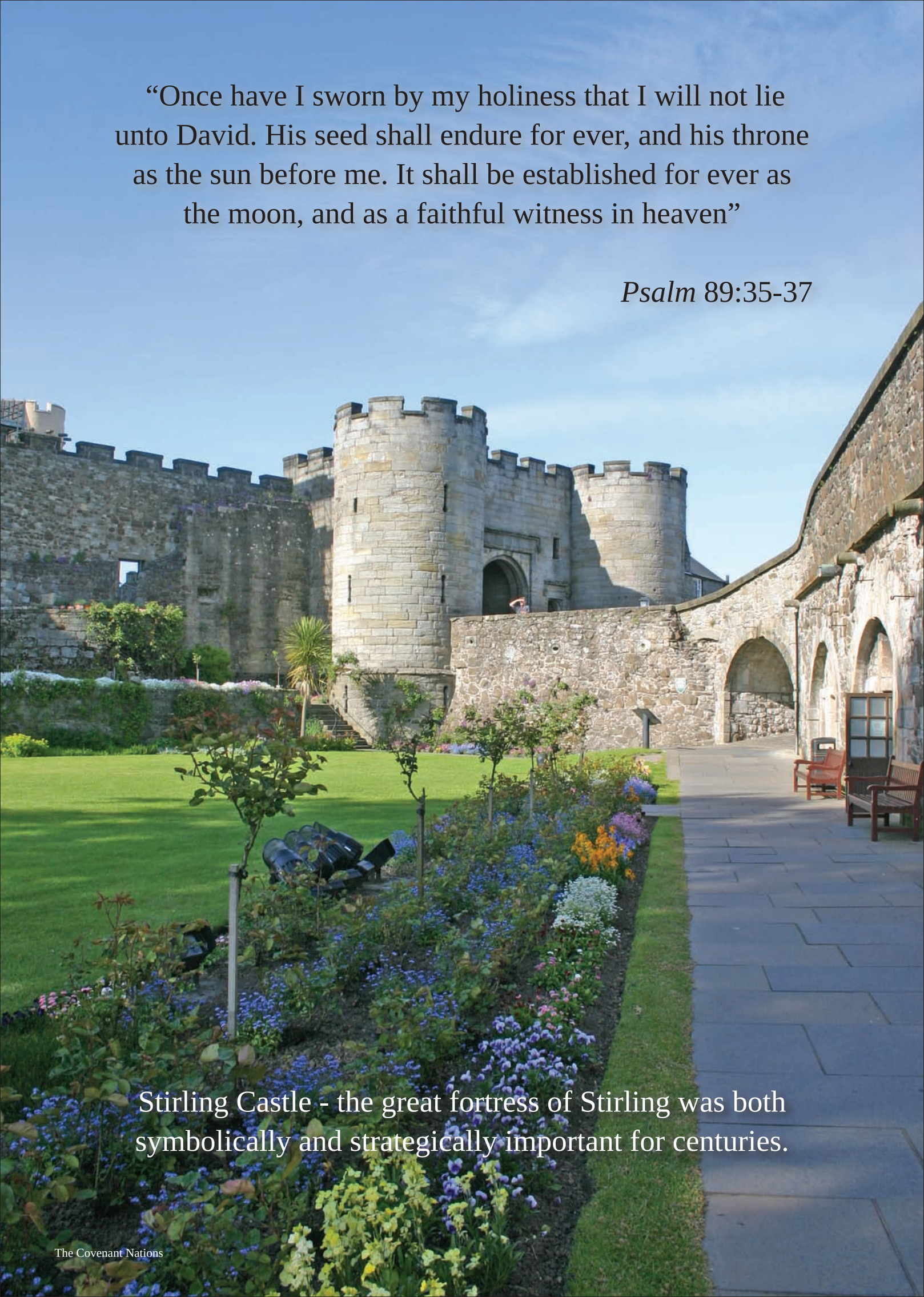

"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven"

Psalm 89:35-37

Stirling Castle - the great fortress of Stirling was both symbolically and strategically important for centuries.

EDITORIAL

‘THE POWERS OF THE HEAVENS SHALL BE SHAKEN’

The fulfilment of prophecy is always more profound than is thought before fulfilment takes place. Jesus Christ said of His prophetic words: *“I have told you before it is come to pass, that* ***when*** *it is come to pass, ye might believe*” (*John* 14:29).

In His Olivet discourse, Jesus said that the time would come at the Age-end and that in those days *“shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*” (*Matthew* 24:29).

These words of Jesus concerning the sun, moon and stars and the powers of the heavens being shaken are directly applicable to the powers of the *continuing* kingdom of heaven upon earth. Since Britain has been in the EU a total eclipse of the Sovereignty of the United Kingdom and of ‘the Queen-in-Parliament under God’ has taken place. The blazing glory of the Davidic Throne is represented by the sun and the law by the light of the moon. These powers have been eclipsed and darkness has covered the earth as the powers of the Kingdom of God in our midst have been shaken.

The darkness has overwhelmed the stars and the peoples and nations in distress have been unable to find their way during the past four decades. The shaking of the powers of heaven upon earth was also taking place at the time of the Watergate crisis in the United States in 1974 when President Nixon, the 37th United States President, became the only president to resign in office, forty years ago on 9 August – a period of trial. Senator Sam Ervin said at the Watergate hearings that after everything “the powers of heaven had not fallen.” The number 37 is the 12th prime number, linked to government and significant of ‘The Word.’

Seventy years ago (determination) the Bretton Woods Agreement of 22 July, 1944, set the US dollar at $35 for one troy ounce of gold. This was ended by the Nixon Administration on 15 August, 1971, making the US dollar a fiat currency; thus 15 August, 2014, marks 43 years or 12 x 1290 *solar* days – a period linked to government and desolation – from when the most powerful covenant nation was separated from the Gold Standard first set up by King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon.

A great shaking could be about to descend upon the financial world and not least upon the eurozone. Why did Gordon Brown, the then UK Chancellor, sell half of the UK’s gold reserves over a period between 1999 and 2002, when gold prices were at their lowest in 20 years? Was it a prophetic signal for what is now approaching?

The great hope for the covenant nations is that a total eclipse does not last for long and soon the diamond ring becomes visible. This is now beginning to be seen in the UK as the nation moves towards coming out of the EU when the Sovereignty of the Davidic Throne will be restored and Britain’s laws will be returned from Europe.

A total solar eclipse took place in southern England on 11 August 1999, the path of totality tracking from the Atlantic across Europe to northern India. Fifteen years (one ‘hour’) from that eclipse expires on 11 August, 2014, which is also 390 days (Britain and USA trouble) from Royal Assent being given to the Same-sex Marriage Bill in the UK. Another 40 days (Judah/ Royal House trouble) expires on 20 September, 2014 when the result of the Scottish Referendum on Independence will be known.

The Scottish Referendum threatens to shake the powers of the United Kingdom. When Scotland and England were united it was the sign of the two sticks of Judah and Israel being joined together in *Ezekiel* 37:15-28. Well might we say of that marriage of kingdoms, ‘what God has joined together, let no man put asunder.’ Man proposes and the Lord God of Israel disposes. We humbly wait to see how He acts.

CREATION TO THE LORD'S DAY

The Authority of Christ and the First Day Sabbath

Creation Ordinance
It is God's Creation ordinance that man begins his week by submitting to God and humbly listening to His Word. Before the Fall of Adam and Eve into sin, mankind was to start his week with a Sabbath rest and worship. After the Fall, God commanded man to end his week with a Sabbath. The Paradise rest which God provided, and which was symbolised in the Sabbath, was forfeited by man's disobedience. This first day Sabbath would only be restored by the Second Adam's future obedience. In Christ the first day Sabbath is restored to its position at Creation and man can once again rest in God's finished work of Recreation and Redemption before he embarks on a week of obedience and service to the Lord.

Day Six
All of the days of God's Creation week are a model for man's worship, service, dominion and rest. The order of events on Day Six were the creation of land creatures (*Genesis* 1:24-25), the creation of Adam (*Genesis* 2:7), the creation of the garden (*Genesis* 2:8), instructions to man (*Genesis* 2:15-17), the bringing of the animals before Adam to be named, and also to create in him a desire for his own partner (*Genesis* 2:18-20), the creation of Eve (*Genesis* 2:21-25), further instructions (*Genesis* 1:28-30), and the ending of the day with God's declaration that everything was "*Very good*" (*Genesis* 1:31). Comparing *Genesis* 1:29-31 with the time span of *Genesis* 2:7-21 shows that Eve was created towards the end of Day Six, in time to hear God's blessings and commandments in *Genesis* 1:28-31 and before the ushering in of the Sabbath.

Man's First Day was the Sabbath
So mankind's first full day was God's Sabbath Day. Day Seven of God's week was mankind's first day, "*evening and morning*." God ended His week with rest, but God intended man to begin his week with worship and rest. From the very beginning God made clear the distinction between Creator and creature. Man must not attempt to play God by exercising dominion in his own strength and wisdom. God is our Creator and we must begin our week by bowing to Him and submitting to His instructions. It is only as we rest in God's finished work of Creation that we can be in any position to be effective in God-honouring dominion.

Rebellion
However, Adam and Eve rebelled against God's design. Mankind sought to begin his week independent of God rather than beginning with worship and dependence on God alone. Adam and Eve rebelled against God's purpose for both the Sabbath and their dominion work. They were seduced by Satan's sinful suggestion that they could be "*like God*." They chose to submit to a wisdom other than God's and they sought to take dominion independent of the Creator. By their actions, Adam and Eve undermined the whole purpose and character of the Sabbath.

Consequences of Sin
As a result, God judged the rebellion of Adam and Eve. The curse of sin includes frustration for the woman in her natural relationships within the home, painful labour in bearing children and subordination toward her husband. The man is frustrated in his activity to provide food, in toil, with thorns and by the sweat of his face. Ultimately, they will experience that the wages of sin is death. The harmony, intimacy and partnership of the pre-Fall marriage relationship are corrupted by sin.

Promised Redemption
Yet even at this time of Judgment, God gave a promise of Redemption and new life through the coming Messiah: "*And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel*" (*Genesis* 3:15). From the time of the Fall, humanity has been divided into two communities: the redeemed who love God and the reprobate who love self. This division was soon seen in the hostility of Cain against the righteous Abel. The prophecy of *Genesis* 3:15 finds ultimate fulfilment in the triumph of the Second Adam, Christ (and the community united with Him), over the forces of sin, Satan and death itself. The Seed of the woman, Christ, will suffer, but

His Atonement will provide ultimate victory, symbolised in the crushing of Satan's head.

The Bondage of the Law

From the time of the Fall, God commanded man to end his week with a Sabbath rest. One of the many consequences of man's sin was that instead of beginning the week in God's grace and strength, man was placed under the burden of the Law, to enjoy a Sabbath rest only at the end of his work week. This pointed to the promised Messiah who would accomplish what the first Adam had failed to do. Man's rest was cursed, just as his dominion was. Until the time of the Messiah, mankind was commanded to imitate God by completing his work week before being able to enjoy a Sabbath rest. So Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices before God at the end of the week. In *Exodus* 16, even before Israel arrived at Mount Sinai and before the Law was given, they observed the Sabbath on the seventh day. The New Testament speaks of this Sabbath imagery to illustrate the bondage symbolised in the pre-resurrection Sabbath observance and to point to the liberty and grace the Messiah would bring.

The Shadow and the Substance

Under the Old Covenant, the seventh day Sabbath was a reminder of man's inability to fulfil God's Law, but it also pointed to God's gracious promise of what the Second Adam would accomplish. This helps to explain why the old Covenant Sabbath (along with all the Law of Moses) was seen as such a burden and curse. "*Now I say this lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words... as you therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the Faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power.*

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through Faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the Cross, having disarmed principalities and powers, who made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. *Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking the light and false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things in which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments grows with the increase that is from God. Therefore if you died with Christ, from the basic principles of this world, why as though living in the world do you subject yourself to regulations... these things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh*" (*Colossians* 2:4-23).

A New Covenant

Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled all the demands of the old Covenant: "*And for this reason He is the mediator of the new Covenant, by means of death, for the Redemption of the transgressions under the first Covenant, that those who are called may receive a promise of the eternal inheritance*" (*Hebrews* 9:15).

A New Creation

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new" (II *Corinthians* 5:17).

Isaiah, chapters 65 to 66, anticipates a time when all things would be made new as a result of the coming of the Messiah (*Isaiah* 66:7-9): a new Heaven and a new earth (*Isaiah* 65:17); changed people (*Isaiah* 65:18-19); changes in worship (*Isaiah* 66:1-4); changes in church government (*Isaiah* 66:18-21); when even priests would no longer be from the tribe of Levi, but even from among the Gentiles (*Isaiah* 66:21)! When even the Sabbath would be changed "*from one Sabbath to another*" (*Isaiah* 66:23).

Jubilee

This new Creation was anticipated by the Jubilee year which was the year after the seventh seven. Christ declared Himself to be the fulfilment of Jubilee (*Luke* 4:19). The Sabbath would be changed. Every Sunday is the day after the seventh – a Jubilee.

The Stone which the Builders Rejected

The middle chapter of the Bible is *Psalm* 118. Addressing the Sanhedrin, the apostle Peter expounds on *Psalm* 118: ***"Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by your builders, which has become the chief Cornerstone. Nor is there salvation in any other. There is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved"*** (*Acts* 4:10-12).

The Day that the Lord has Made

That verse in *Psalm* 118 continues: "*This was the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.* ***This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it***" (*Psalm* 118:23-24). This Psalm not only rejoices in the Resurrection of the Messiah, but in the making of a new day in weekly celebration. This is the Lord's Day, an ongoing day for worship and celebration. "*You are My God, and I will praise You; You are My God, I will exalt You, O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever*" (*Psalm* 118:28-29).

First Day and Eighth Day Sabbaths

The Law of God refers to a "*first day Sabbath*" as well as an "*eighth day Sabbath*" (*Leviticus* 23:39). In the Greek Septuagint, the title for *Psalm* 24 is: "A Psalm of David on a First Day Sabbath."

A New Sabbath

In the Gospels, a new Sabbath is created. The third day of the Passover festival (also called *first-fruits*) is referred to as a Sabbath day in each of the four Gospels (*Matthew* 28:1; *Mark* 16:2; *Luke* 24:1; *John* 20:1). In each Gos-

pel account there was a bold declaration that something new had come, and that all things were to be made new.

"*Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn*" (*Matthew* 28:1).

"*Now when the Jewish Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdelaine, Mary, the mother of James and Salome brought spices so that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen*" (*Mark* 16:1-2, 9).

"*Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning they came to the tomb*" (*John* 20:1).

Paul observed the First Day Sabbath

"*Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul spoke to them*" (*Acts* 20:7). Here, the Apostle Paul, arrived in Troas on a Monday (*Acts* 20:6) and delayed his hurried trip until the following Monday, so that he could worship with the church on Sunday (*Acts* 20:7). He was clearly delaying his rushed trip for an important purpose.

Instructions to the Church

"*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so must you do also; on the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as He may prosper that there be no collections when I come*" (I *Corinthians* 16:1-2).

An Imperative for Believers

Notice the three imperatives: "*as I have given orders,*" "*so must you do also,*" and "*let each lay aside.*" This verse is in the present active imperative. It is a command and it is to be continuously observed. This is not just something the Corinthians must do, but something universally mandated for all churches. It is clearly speaking about an act of corporate worship in the community of believers, in the context of fellowship and worship. Sunday was the Lord's Day, sanctified for collective worship and for the receiving of tithe and offerings.

The Lord's Day

The Apostle John writes of being "*in the spirit on the Lord's Day*" (*Revelation* 1:10). This is the same terminology used for the Lord's Supper (I *Corinthians* 11:20). The Lord Jesus Christ is "*Lord of the Sabbath*" (*Matthew* 12:8). He is the one who made the Day (*Psalm* 118:24); it is the Day that He has risen from the dead. It is also the Day that He sent the Holy Spirit. The Church was born on Pentecost Sunday (*Acts* 2:1): "*They were all with one accord in one place*."

> "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"
>
> *Psalm* 118:24

Another Sabbath and another Joshua

"*Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered his rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His*" (*Hebrews* 4:7-10). Here the writer of the *Hebrews* quotes from the Psalm of David, speaking of the Day of Salvation which would come from the Messiah. This day was not the end of history. It was the day when the Messiah would be raised, given all authority in Heaven and on earth. This day is a different day from when Israel crossed the Jordan to enter the land. On that "*other day*" the Messiah Himself led His way into the Kingdom of God. Joshua led the way over the Jordan, but the Messiah is not only greater than Joshua leading the way into possessing the land of the Kingdom, but He also stands as our great High Priest, parting the waters of the Jordan, enabling his people to not only enter the Kingdom by Faith, but to conquer the land in such a way that multitudes of others would enter His Kingdom.

A Sign of the Covenant

Hebrews 4:9 tells us that there remains a Sabbath observance for the people of God. This is a sign of the everlasting Covenant. It is a promise that one day the new Heavens and the new earth will be brought in and we will be able to cease from our labours and our works will follow us. None of this can refer to our initial Salvation experience but can only refer to Heaven. We are called to be that 'Joshua generation' which will seek to enter the rest. We cannot be like the unbelieving generation who wandered in the wilderness through lack of faith and obedience. We are called to be the believing generation that will conquer the land for our Lord in terms of the Great Commission.

Changes

The other two signs of the Covenant have also been changed. Circumcision has now been replaced by Baptism. The Passover has been fulfilled in the Lord's Supper. In the same way the seventh day Sabbath is now transformed into the first day Sabbath, in keeping with God's original Creation purpose for Adam and Eve. Christ, our Second Adam, has redeemed for us what the first Adam lost through disobedience.

The Teaching of the Apostles

This has always been the teaching of the early church. In the ***Didache*** – *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (the oldest book of the early Church), it is clearly stated: "*On the day of the Resurrection of the Lord, that is the Lord's Day, assemble yourselves together without fail, giving thanks to God and praising Him for those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ, and has delivered you from ignorance, error and bondage, that your sacrifice may be unspotted, and acceptable to God ... But every Lord's Day, do ye gather yourselves together and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may pure*."

Do Not Fast on the Lord's Day

The *Didache* also taught: "*Every Lord's Day hold your solemn assemblies, and rejoice: For he will be guilty of sin who fasts on the Lord's Day, being the Day of the Resurrection ...*"

"*And on the Day of our Lord's Resurrection, which is the Lord's Day, meet more diligently – otherwise what apology will He make to God who does not assemble on that Day to hear the saving Word concerning the Resurrection ... ?*"

Delivered from the Jewish Traditions

The early church father **Ignatius**, in AD 107, wrote: "*Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables which are unprofitable. For if we still lived according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace ... if therefore those who*

were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also a life has sprung up again by Him and by His death ... Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the Resurrection Day, the Queen and Chief of all the days of the week. It is absurd to speak of Jesus Christ with the tongue and to cherish in the mind a Judaism which is now come to an end. For where there is Christianity there cannot be Judaism ..."

Remember the Resurrection

Justin Martyr in his first *Apology* written in AD 150 taught: "*But Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day of the week and Jesus our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. We are always together with one another and for all the things with which we are supplied we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit and on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in the city or a rural district ... since it is the first day, on which God changed the darkness and matter and made the world, and Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the same day. For they crucified Him on the day before Saturn's day and on the day (which is the day of the Sun) He appeared to His Apostles and taught His disciples these things.*"

The Eighth Day

In his *Dialogue*, Justin wrote: "*Through the Resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week of Jesus Christ our Lord. For the first day of the week, although it is the first of all days, yet according to the number of days of the cycle is called the eighth (while still remaining the first).*"

Keep the Lord's Day

Clement of Alexandria in AD 190 wrote: "*He does the Commandment according to the Gospel and keeps the Lord's Day, whenever he puts away an evil mind ... glorifying the Lord's Resurrection in himself*" (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*).

Sunday not Saturday

The church father **Tertullian** in AD 200 wrote: "*We solemnise the day after Saturday in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath*" (Tertullian's *Apology*, chapter 16).

As with Circumcision

Tertullian also wrote in *An Answer to the Jews*: "*It follows, accordingly, that insofar as the abolition of carnal circumcision and of the old law is demonstrated as having been consummated at its specific times, so also the observance of the Sabbath is demonstrated to have been temporary.*" In *To the Nations*, Tertullian writes: "*It is well known that we regard Sunday as a day of joy.*"

A New Day

The church father, **Origen** in his *Commentary on John* wrote: "*Hence it is not possible that the day of rest after the Sabbath should have come into existence from the seventh day of our God. On the contrary, it is our Saviour who, after the pattern of His own rest, caused us to be made in the likeness of His death and hence also of His Resurrection.*"

Free from Worldly Distractions

In *Homil*, Origen wrote: "*On Sunday none of the actions of the world should be done. If then you abstain from all the works of this world and keep yourselves free for spiritual things, go to church and listen to the readings and divine homilies, meditate on Heavenly things.*"

The Eighth Day

The church father, **Cyprian**, in AD 250 wrote in his *Epistle* of "*The eighth day, that is the first day after the Sabbath and the Lord's Day*."

Christ abolished the Jewish Sabbath

Victorinus in AD 300 wrote in *The Creation of the World*: "*This sixth day is called parasceve, that is to say the*

preparation of the Kingdom ... on this day also, on account of the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ we make either a station to God or a fast. On the seventh day He rested from all His works and blessed it and sanctified it. On the former day we are accustomed to fast rigorously, that on the Lord's Day we may go forth to our bread with giving of thanks and let the parasceve become a rigorous fast, lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews ... which Sabbath Christ in His body abolished."

Sunday is the Christian Sabbath

Eusebius of Caesarea wrote in his *Ecclesiastical History*, in AD 300: "*They do not, therefore, regard circumcision, nor observe the Sabbath, neither do we; ... because such things as these do not belong to Christians.*" In his *Proof of the Gospel*, Eusebius wrote: "*The Day of His Resurrection from the dead ... the one and only truly Holy Day and the Lord's Day is better than ... the days set apart by the Mosaic law for feasts, new moons and Sabbaths, which the Apostle Paul teaches are the shadow of days and not days in reality.*"

New Covenant Sabbath

In AD 345 **Athanasius** wrote in *On Sabbath and Circumcision*: "*The Sabbath was the end of the first Creation, the Lord's Day was the beginning of the second, in which He renewed and restored the old in the same way as He prescribed as they should formerly observe the Sabbath as a memorial of the end of the first things, so we honour the Lord's Day as being the memorial of the new Creation.*"

A Solemn Warning

In his *Catechetical Lectures* of AD 350, **Cyril of Jerusalem** warned: "*Fall not away either into the sect of the Samaritans or into Judaism, for Jesus Christ has henceforth ransomed you. Stand aloof from all observations of Sabbaths and from calling any indifferent meats common or unclean.*"

Beware the Pitfall

The famous preacher of St Sophia in Constantinople, **John Chrysostom** in AD 387 wrote: "*You have put on Christ, you have become a member of the Lord and been enrolled in the Heavenly city, and you still grovel in the law of Moses? How is it possible for you to obtain the Kingdom? Listen to Paul's words, that the observance of the law overthrows the Gospel and learn if you will how this comes to pass and tremble and shun this pitfall. Why do you keep the Sabbath and fast with the Jews?*" (*Homilies on Galatians*).

> "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me"
>
> *Matthew* 28:18

The Saturday Sabbath is abolished along with Circumcision

"*The right of circumcision was venerable in the Jews' account, forasmuch the Sabbath was less esteemed than circumcision. For that circumcision might be performed, the Sabbath was broken; but that the Sabbath might be kept, circumcision was never broken; and mark, I pray, the dispensation of God. This is found to be even more solemn than the Sabbath, as not being omitted at certain times. When then it is done away, much more is the Sabbath*" (Chrysostom's *Homilies on Philippians*).

Diligently observe the Lord's Day

In the *Apostolic Constitution* it states: "*And on the day of our Lord's Resurrection, which is the Lord's Day, meet more diligently, sending praise to God that made the universe by Jesus, and sent Him to us, and condescended to let Him suffer, and raised Him from the dead. Otherwise what apology will He make to God who does not assemble on that day? ... in which is performed the reading of the prophets, the preaching of the Gospel, the oblation of the sacrifice, the gift of the holy food.*"

The Sabbath for Gentile Believers

Clearly the Sabbath is a Creation ordinance (*Genesis* 2:3). Gentiles are commanded to keep the Sabbath (*Isaiah* 56:1-8; 66:23): "*Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the Lord to serve Him and to love the Name of the Lord, to be a servant – everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and holds fast My Covenant – even them I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer... For My house will be called* ***a house of prayer for all nations***" (*Isaiah* 56:6-7).

From one Sabbath to Another

"*And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord*" (*Isaiah* 66:23). The Scripture speaks of "*yet I will gather to Him others besides those who are gathered to Him.*"

The Authority of Christ

The Ascension is all about authority. Christ has "*gone into Heaven and is at God's right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him*" (I *Peter* 3:22). "*All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you ...*" (*Matthew* 28:18-20).

The Lordship and Victory of Christ

The Ascension proclaims the Lordship of Christ in all areas of life. ***"He will crush kings on the day of His wrath. He will judge nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth"*** (*Psalm* 110:5-6). The Ascension proclaims the ultimate victory of Christ. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Those who refuse to bow to Christ as Saviour and Lord today, in the day of grace, when forgiveness is freely available, will one day be forced to bow to Christ as the eternal Judge.

"The Lord says to My Lord: 'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet' " (*Psalm* 110:1).

Call the Lord's Day a Delight

"*Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of streets to dwell in.* ***If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honourable, and shall honour it, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Lord and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken"*** (*Isaiah* 58:12-14).

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THE GREENWICH MERIDIAN – *no mean time*

One hundred and thirty years ago this year a notable episode in world history took place which not only linked the covenant nations in a most fundamental way, but also made the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England, the centre and Prime Meridian of the World – Longitude zero – and Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), global time.

In 1884 there was an international attempt to produce order in the world's reckoning of time. On 1 October, invited by the President and Congress of the United States, forty-two delegates from twenty-seven states attended a Conference at Washington. It was mainly intended: "for the purpose of discussing, and, if possible, fixing upon a meridian proper to be employed as a common zero of longitude and standard of time-reckoning throughout the globe . . . in place of the multiplicity of initial meridians which now exist." There were then *thirteen* different meridians of longitude in use.

On 24 October as the Conference's Final Act they voted a number of Resolutions. The second Resolution, moved by the United States, approved the adoption of Greenwich as the initial meridian. Other meridians had been discussed, including those of Paris and Rome. Brazil and France wanted a "neutral" meridian, such as Jerusalem or the Great Pyramid; but as there were no great observatories at these points this was not considered practical. One delegate remarked that "the adoption of the meridian of Greenwich had *not* been sought after by Great Britain." In the end, San Domingo alone voted against the choice (France and Brazil abstained) and probably it was the only occasion in history when all the nations of the world have agreed on anything.

From the latter part of the eighteenth century the Greenwich meridian was the most commonly used line of east-west reckoning among mariners of the world. For over three centuries, seamen have owed thanks to King Charles II, who on 22 June, 1675, declared by royal warrant that "in order to the finding out of the longitude of places and for perfecting navigation and astronomy, we have resolved to build a small observatory within our park at Greenwich . . ." Thus was set in motion a project that was, eventually, to result in order succeeding chaos in the matter of global chronology.

By 1884 Britain had emerged from her long somnolence and, morally at least, was attracting the notice and respect, not only of the great world powers, but of the smaller, emerging countries who sought protection and friendship in a world that was rapidly being divided into great expansionist power blocs.

On every map the line of zero longitude – the Prime Meridian – passes through Greenwich. It has been written: "This was not through any Act of God: it was a decision of the nations." But was it? The fact is, the British Isles in particular were appointed by God (II *Samuel* 7:10) as a place where His Servant People would be planted anew, where they would grow and develop into a great people and a company of nations. In their midst was to be set the everlasting seat of the Lord's authority, the Royal Davidic Throne, which would never be found wanting a descendant until the actual return of Jesus Christ as Sovereign Lord (II *Samuel* 7:16; *Isaiah* 9:6-7; *Luke* 1:32-33).

Ever since the Summer Time Act of 1916 Britain has been 'mucking about with the clock' and in 1967 double Summer Time was introduced as an 'experiment' which proved highly unpopular. Undoubtedly there was the hidden agenda of introducing Britain to Central European Time for the purposes of bringing us closer to Europe as the 'Great European Project' got under way. The name *British Standard Time* was considered, but of course had it been brought in on a permanent basis we would have lost Greenwich Mean Time which was the gift of the nations to Britain. In effect Britain would have been put on Berlin Time and Hitler's alleged dream of having the Prime Meridian fixed on the German capital would have been accomplished.

At the time, in 1970, a very informative small booklet entitled *In the Dark – The Summer Time Story and The Painless Plan* by A P Herbert was published by Bodley Head (SBN 370 01333 6) which explained that before the end of 1970 Parliament at Westminster would have to decide whether the latest experiment with time – Summer Time all the year round – was to be dropped or not. A P Herbert told the full story of Summer Time; questioned the whole concept and proposed a 'Painless Plan' for securing Daylight Saving without tampering with the clocks.

This simple plan involved the flexi adjustment of offices and institutions beginning one hour earlier than usual in summer without any sense of compulsion. The farmers, builders, schools and others would do what suited them, and not being bound by the clock or by law, they would change their practice with the seasons. Almost on a regular basis some MP still tries to bring before Parliament a Bill to change times and seasons by confusing the issue of the clock so destroying GMT which is a unique part of our heritage used by Aviation and Shipping throughout the world.

The author standing astride Longitude Zero at Greenwich

In fulfilling her Divine destiny, Britain – without conscious plan or purpose – went on to exercise dominion and to bring peace, liberty and freedom from want to more than a quarter of the world's population. But, alas, blind to her identity and lacking the vision to maintain God's moral and national laws, forty-two years ago in 1972 Britain lost its sense of direction and role in the world and has been destroyed from within by the servants of the Arch Deceiver. The number forty-two is the number of confusion (or being at 'sixes and sevens') and so it is that for Jonah-Britain the time for being regurgitated from the 'belly of hell' in the great European fish draws near.

The Washington Conference, now 10 x 13 years ago and significant of Divine order linked to the factor (13) so predominantly associated with the United States, may well indicate a significant change of times. Will events now begin to restore in us as covenant nations a true sense of our global calling and mission to lead the nations in peace? In the words of Solomon, "*Where there is no vision the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he*" (*Proverbs* 29:18).

MICHAEL A CLARK

2014

THE END OF SUMMER

When I was learning Welsh, I was intrigued to discover that the word in that language for July – Gorffennaf – literally means 'the end of Summer.' It seemed a reminder of cool, damp holidays in August. But our Celtic forefathers saw the seasons differently. 'Gorffennaf' really means 'the end of the growing season,' and under the old Julian calendar the end of July would have seen the beginning of harvest.

The following day, 1 August, is marked in the Prayer Book as Lammas Day – 'Loaf Mass' – when in the Middle Ages a loaf baked from the first sheaf of the new harvest was presented at the altar. It was a symbolic dedication of the harvest to God, literally the first fruit. It also diverted attention from pre-Christian harvest customs which survived long into our era.

Lammas is now little more than a folk memory though recently it has been revived by neo-Pagans. But it is remarkable that, along with Christmas, Easter and Remembrance Sunday, Harvest Thanksgiving (a Victorian invention) is one of the high points of the churchgoing year. Unlike our mediaeval ancestors, we celebrate harvest at the end, not the beginning, of the season when 'all is safely gathered in.' Why is it that in our urban and suburban society it still has its fascination for us? Is it that, at heart, we are still countrymen and women, our ambition to own a garden, allotment or window box in which to grow something, anything?

The trouble is that this is separate from our occupations – the literal earning of our 'daily bread.' Some years ago, I dropped in at a Welsh cathedral when the local grammar school were having their Speech Day. It was September and they were looking back over the achievements of the past year – exam results, university entrance, sports successes. Was this in fact their harvest thanksgiving?

In the secular climate of the present age, it would be difficult to replicate this for a factory or a business firm. Where the custom of Wakes week still survives, a Christian employee could see this as a Sabbath – a time for rest, recreation and thanksgiving.

There is, of course, one occupation which keeps its sense of dependency on God's providence and protection – the harvest of the sea. "*They that go down to the sea in ships: and occupy their business in great waters. These men see the works of the Lord*" (*Psalm* 107:23-24). The annual blessing of the boats by a local bishop or vicar is still very much part of seafaring.

But all of this is not only a celebration of God's loving kindness, but a metaphor for the Great Harvest – that of Christian souls. The great time to celebrate those who have joined or been admitted to the Christian community is Holy Saturday, traditionally one of the great times for Holy Baptism and when now we renew our baptismal vows.

I gather that the Moravians have a custom we all might ponder. At Easter they remember all those of their community laid to rest in the graveyard in the past year. This is anything but macabre – the harvest of the Grim Reaper. Rather, it is a celebration of those 'called home' and safe for ever in the hands of our Heavenly Father.

REV BARRIE WILLIAMS

THE HARVEST OF ISRAEL

"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you, I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you'" (*Genesis* 12:1-3).

Bless the Nations

This principle of Divine election for universal service is stated and re-stated time and again in Genesis: ***"Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him"*** (*Genesis* 18:18).

"And through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed Me" (*Genesis* 22:18).

God re-stated this Divine call and commission to Abraham's son, Isaac:
"through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed" (*Genesis* 26:4).

God also re-confirmed this missionary call to Isaac's son, Jacob:
"All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring" (*Genesis* 28:14).

The Missionary Call of Israel

"Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, 'This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now, if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for Me a Kingdom of priests and a Holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites'" (*Exodus* 19:3-6).

Israel was constituted as a nation of unique position among the nations. All the earth belongs to God. What makes Israel unique is its **missionary call**, its priestly position, its mediatorial mission as God's bridge to the **nations**.

Let the Earth Hear His Voice

Israel is not meant to be a storehouse of God's blessings but **a channel**. God did not choose Israel so that we can be selfish. Israel was **saved to serve**. Isaac's sons have received God's Word in order to **proclaim it**. The descendants of Abraham have been blessed so that we can **be a blessing** to ***"all the families of the earth"*** (*Genesis* 12:1-3).

Israel was never meant to live for herself alone. Israel's call is to be God's chosen instrument to bring God's Word to the nations.

"I will also make you a light for the gentiles, that you may bring My salvation to the ends of the earth" (*Isaiah* 49:6).

Called to be God's witnesses to the nations, Israel's commission is both **prophetic** and **missionary.** We are to receive God's Word and to proclaim that Word as God's priests to the nations.

The recorded messages of the prophets of Israel and the recorded history of the people of Israel continue to speak as God's Word to us today. In this way the descendants of Abraham have already been a ***"blessing to all nations on earth"*** – through the Bible and through Missions.

A Chosen People

But, God has used Israel in an even greater way, for not only did God's Word come through Israel. God Himself not only sent His prophets through Israel, but He also sent His Son. Israel is the channel for **God's Word, God's Son** and **God's Salvation** for the world!

Now, God's Word comes to us:
"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light" (I *Peter* 2:9).

A Missionary Call

Israel historically did produce some excellent missionaries, including: **Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Esther, Jonah** and many others. More than this, through Israel, God spoke. He spoke through the prophets, He spoke through Israel's history and ultimately, He spoke in and through His Son - Jesus the Messiah.

Through Israel, God's royal priesthood, the world has received the Bible, which is God's Word, and Jesus Christ, who is God's Son, the Reformation, the Great Awakening and the modern missionary movement: William Carey, David Livingstone, Hudson Taylor, Mary Slessor, C.T. Studd and many more.

"May Your ways be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations... May all the peoples praise you… all the ends of the earth will fear Him" (*Psalm* 67).

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WHY WE SHOULD REMEMBER

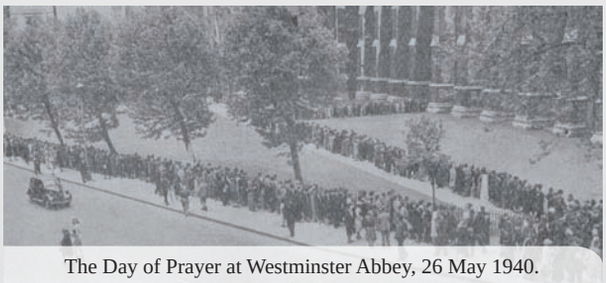
Recently I conducted the funeral of a lady who had died in her eighties. As a child she had been knocked down by a car and critically injured. Surgeons fought to save her life which hung in the balance and after much effort she recovered.

Although this accident took place long ago the consequences from it, namely that she survived, lasted the rest of her life! The important thing was not "when the event occurred" but rather **"the consequences"** of that event. Happening decades earlier never changed the fact that the outcome of this event meant she lived a long full life. The timing of it was completely irrelevant. You could say that she lived the rest of her days "on the back" of the efforts of those who struggled to save her. This example reminds us that it is the consequence of an event which is important not its timing.

Two important anniversaries of the outbreak of wars are marked this year: 4 August for the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and 3 September for the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. There have been some significant commemorations but some argue "*well it is so long ago, why remember the past?*" or "*it is just for the elderly to think about.*" When I hear comments like this I really wonder at how uninformed and naïve some people can be. The fact that these events of the First and Second World Wars took place 100 and 75 years ago is irrelevant; the real issue is that the consequences of those events being so profound are still with us today.

If the outcome of those wars had been different, quite literally you would not be alive to read this article and I would never have been born to write it. We should regularly reflect on and remember the enormity of this truth. Present lives need to be set in the context of the past. The First World War concluded with an Armistice in 1918. When hostilities were resumed in September 1939 this country was in such a terrible state we were brought to our knees – quite literally. Many also seem to have forgotten just how close we came to defeat and national annihilation.

At first when war was declared nothing much happened, but within a few months France and Belgium fell to the Germans. The only port from which to evacuate the British Army was Dunkirk where they were trapped against the sea. Our troops were encircled and the German Army was proceeding to their annihilation. The position was so serious it was estimated that perhaps only 20,000 men might be rescued. The whole root, core and brains of the British Army was about to perish. There was no human solution to this crisis; the end of the British way of life had come – or so it appeared.



The Day of Prayer at Westminster Abbey, 26 May 1940.
From *We have a Guardian* Covenant Publishing.

When it became clear how serious the situation was King George VI called for a National Day of Prayer to be held on 26 May, 1940. In a national broadcast he instructed the people of the UK to plead for Divine Intervention. Together with the members of the Cabinet, the King attended Westminster Abbey whilst literally millions of people across the British Isles flocked to churches to join in prayer seeking deliverance. Nothing like it had ever been seen before in our country or indeed in any country with people queuing to get into churches pleading for help.

What happened next was the most miraculous and timely deliverance ever to occur in the history of our nation with two great phenomena following this National Day of Prayer. The first was a great storm which broke out over the area on the 28 May hindering the murderous work of the German air force and the second was the great calm which settled on the English Channel the like of which has not been seen for decades. This calm enabled an armada of boats to rescue no less than 335,000 men! Four years later of course, this deliverance further meant that Britain was able to provide a "launch pad" for the liberation of Europe. If the British Army had been destroyed at Dunkirk the UK would then have been occupied and the liberation of Europe would never have happened.

The violent storm and Channel calm immediately following this Day of Prayer made possible what people began to call "*the miracle of Dunkirk.*" Sunday 9 June was appointed as a Day of National Thanksgiving. There had been no human solution to this national crisis; it had been solved by Divine Intervention alone. There were so many other instances of Divine Assistance at crucial moments in the war that in October 1942 Churchill was moved to comment "*I sometimes have a feeling of interference. I want to stress that. I have a feeling sometimes that some Guiding Hand has interfered. I have a feeling that we have a Guardian because we have a great Cause and we shall have that Guardian so long as we serve that Cause faithfully.*"

As we go through the series of anniversaries let us remember just how different it could have been and nearly was. We are living our lives "on the back" of a series of deliverances and miracles as well as the sacrifices made by countless individuals in the field of conflict. It is "**no small thing**" that we are remembering. And as we remember let us also ask "*are we showing ourselves worthy of such deliverances?*" "*Is our nation and society setting an example to the world by our beliefs and moral standards?*" Churchill stated that while we stood for a great "*Cause*" we would have a "*Guardian.*" But what "*Causes*" do we stand for today: greed, selfish ambition, immorality and unbelief? Such "*Causes*" have no Guardian!

In *Psalm* 107 it warns that "*a fruitful nation will become impoverished because of the wickedness of its people.*" This is an apt description of the state of our country today. There are no human solutions to the problems our nation faces; only a Divine Solution. God will exalt and bless any nation or any society which stands for righteousness, truth, justice and peace so let us put God back at the heart of our country and once again we will see miracles of deliverance.

JONATHAN WILLANS

See pages 16-20 & 31-34 of "*A Call to the Nation.*"
Download free from www.churchsurvey.co.uk.

BRITISH-ISRAEL ON THE AIR

Transcript of a Broadcast Talk on the BBC Woman's Hour *programme in the 'Confessions of Faith' series on Tuesday 22 November, 1960. It was delivered by Mrs Lilian Jones, Secretary of the Exeter Branch of The British-Israel-World Federation and written for Mrs Jones by Miss W M Dodd, MBE, a member of the Board of Management of the BIWF.*

Introduction
Now for the 'Confessions of Faith.' The speaker in the series today is Lilian Jones, a British Israelite, a society which holds the belief that the British Commonwealth of Nations and kindred peoples are descendants of the Israelites of the Bible.

Lilian Jones:
First I want to make it clear that I firmly believe in God and in the Bible, which I take as the revelation of God's will and plan for mankind. I read in the Bible that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I accept those words and I believe, as do all Christians, that Jesus Christ, by His life, death and resurrection, is the Saviour of mankind, that He has conquered death and has therefore the power to give eternal life to those who take Him at His word.

I apply that same faith and acceptance to all that is told us in the Bible. When I read that God promised Noah that the world should never be destroyed by flood waters again, and that, as a proof, He would set a rainbow in the sky; I believe it and see the rainbow for myself.

The prophets of the Old Testament foretold that Christ should be born of a virgin in Bethlehem. I know that it really happened, exactly as foretold, so I have no difficulty in believing the many promises that Jesus shall return again to this earth.

Further, it says in the Bible that when He returns He will set up His Kingdom here on earth and that His throne shall be one about which God's promise was given to His ancestor in the human line, King David, so I find a royal house in the world today, the lineage of which can be traced back to King David. In addition, God promised another ancestor of our Lord in the line of his humanity, namely Abraham, that from him and his heirs should grow a great nation and a 'company of nations.' Now, if I cannot find these promises fulfilled, how can I trust the promise of eternal life through Christ Jesus?

To me it seems the Bible must stand or fall as a whole and that if the promises made by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Noah, to David and to Moses, were not plainly meant to be fulfilled as they were given, God was – in straight terms – deceiving them and did not mean what He said. The promises of the first Advent were fulfilled in every detail. The promises that the nation was to develop into 'a company of nations' have also been fulfilled. We know that St Paul refers to 'the Commonwealth of Israel' in his letter to the Ephesians.

Certainly, these marks of identification do not apply to the Jews – they have never had a secure home – on the contrary, their history down the ages has been of long wandering and oppression. They do not apply to the Church [as individuals], for that is bound by faith to Christ, and is a 'called-out' assembly of all nations and races. No, the promises of God to the patriarchs involved race – one race which was to be preserved as a witness to the true God, and which ultimately was to be the nucleus of the Kingdom to be set up when He returns. We are told that when that day comes: "the government shall be upon His shoulder and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and his kingdom."

This was the same promise given to the Virgin Mary: "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

He Himself promised that when He will come into His Kingdom after the final tribulation, His disciples should "sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," so the whole twelve tribes must be in existence at His coming – the Jews are only part of the tribe [or house] of Judah.

Further, there are no nations in the world today, other than our own nation and the United States, whose Common Law is based on the Ten Commandments.

When I and other British Israelites claim to be Israel, our claim is not because of any fitness on our part – we have proved the contrary so often – but because the Bible makes it plain that God designed to preserve a race, who should, however imperfectly, testify to the existence of God, and preach the Gospel throughout the world. Practically all Christian missionary work has been supported by the English-speaking peoples.

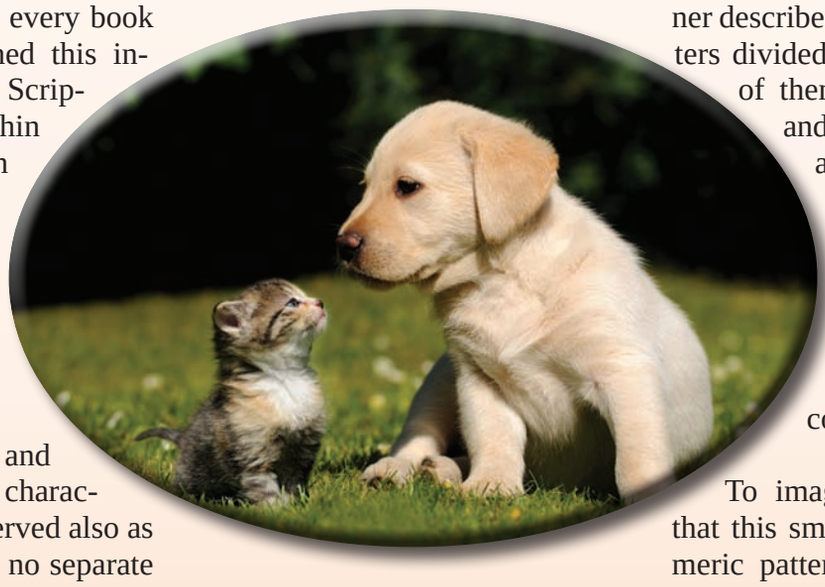
God gave wonderful promises to Israel, and, as Israel in the modern world, we can claim them. He said that, when beset by enemies, if we turned to Him, He would deliver us. Not once, not twice, in our island history has this happened, but many times.

I believe we are approaching a time of mortal danger, when the final conflict is to be joined between the materialistic and anti-God forces of the world, and the one bulwark of freedom – the Commonwealth. If we in Britain are indeed Israel, we can seek and find victory and protection promised to Israel: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." This seems to me to be not only a sensible, as well as a sublime belief, but the only one holding any hope today.

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

The Bible's In-built Security System

Early in the twentieth century Bible students were introduced to the remarkable numeric patterns of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Scriptures discovered by Ivan Panin. As a young man he left his native Russia in 1872 and went to America where he graduated at Harvard University, becoming a noted mathematician. In his early life he was an agnostic but after being converted to the Christian faith he devoted the rest of his life to the subject of Bible numerics in which he had acquired a deep interest. Principally he expounded on his discovery of the constant recurrence of the number '7' in the formation of words and sentences in every book of the Bible. He likened this inbuilt numeric pattern in Scripture to a thread or a thin metal strip inserted in Dollar bills or Sterling notes to bear witness to the authenticity of the paper currency and to protect it from counterfeiting.



In both the Hebrew and Greek languages the characters in their alphabets served also as numbers for there were no separate symbols for numbers as we have in our English written language. So each Hebrew and Greek letter had a numeric value. The nearest we have in our literature to this type of numbering is in the Roman numerals which are still used in places today; e.g. I = 1, V = 5, X = 10, L = 50, C = 100, D = 500, M = 1000. As combinations of these can give numbers of any value required in a written text or communication so, too, could similar combinations of the Hebrew and Greek characters serve that purpose in their languages.

But Panin found that such combinations in the text of God's Word revealed a precise and distinctive pattern throughout the Old and New Testament Scriptures. The presence of this distinctive pattern is even more remarkable when we remember that 44 writers contributed to these books of the Bible and, moreover, they were compiled over a period of more than two thousand years. Therefore no collusion between the writers was possible to ensure the continuity of the numeric pattern, even if they were aware of it, which I doubt. So Divine inspiration was the only possible way of achieving it, and the Bible itself confirms this in the words of the Apostle who declared: "…*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*" (II *Peter* 1:21).

In his writings Panin goes into great detail regarding his discoveries on this subject but, for reasons of space, only a few examples are being given here. So he analyses, for example, the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel which commences with the genealogy of Jesus Christ, beginning at Abraham. The genealogy is subdivided into three sections, firstly from Abraham to King David, which is 14 generations; from David to the captivity, a further 14 generations; then from the captivity to the birth of our Lord, again 14 generations.

Panin pointed out that in the Greek vocabulary, in the first eleven verses of the Gospel recording the period from Abraham to the captivity, there are 49 words which, numerically, is 7 x 7. Of these 49 words 28, 4 x 7, begin with a vowel and 21, 3 x 7, begin with a consonant. The words of the text have 266 letters, which numerically is again a multiple of 7, i.e. 38 x 7. The sum of the figure 266 is 14, again a multiple of 7. Just as the 49 words begin with vowels and consonants in the manner described so also are the 266 letters divided in the same plan: 140 of them are vowels, 20 x 7, and the other 126, 18 x 7, are consonants. Further analysis reveals that of those 49 words 42 are nouns and 7 are not. Of the 42 nouns 35, 5 x 7, are proper names while the other 7 are common names.

To imagine, or even suggest, that this small example of this numeric pattern, taken from Panin's work, could happen by chance would surely be foolishness in the extreme. Such repetition of an arrangement like that could only be by design. He went on to spend forty years of his life in the study of this subject, going through the Bible from beginning to end, and found that this numeric pattern is all-pervading. It is there in every chapter of every book. To find it in a book written in one language would be quite remarkable. To find it in a book originating in two languages, one with a 22 character alphabet, the other with a 24 character alphabet, is surely quite extraordinary.

This numeric pattern served another purpose as Panin found in his studies. There is the exhortation in Scripture that nothing must be added to nor deleted from the Word of God. The Bible we have in our possession has been compiled from several ancient manuscripts and these had some small variations in their texts. One result of this was that there has been some doubt as to whether the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel should be there, and some Bibles place these verses within brackets or in italics to register this doubt. Panin tested the viability of their inclusion in the Gospel by checking to see if the numeric pattern is thus maintained in doing so and found that it is. If the twelve verses are omitted then the pattern is disrupted.

The work of Ivan Panin is probably unique and gives an inspiring insight into the complex nature of God's Word. At the time when Panin was doing his research the Bible and the Christian faith were coming under attack from critics, sceptics and unbelievers. Thus it was that God surely raised up this man with his mathematical skills to reveal to the world this remarkable witness to the inspiration of His Word, to counter the opposition of His detractors and give encouragement to the faithful.

Panin's research and insight into the significance of the number '7' complemented the existing knowledge that this same number is incorporated in the functions of the natural world which God created. Creation itself is marked by the number 7, God having created all things in six days and ceased from His work and rested on the seventh day. Within His creation God incorporated the seven basic colours of the spectrum in the natural world around us; red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. In the production of musical sound there are seven notes recurring in each octave of this audio spectrum. In the reproduction process of human and animal life the gestation period of the foetus is calculated in numbers of either days or weeks and these are found to be in multiples of 7; e.g. for the mouse it is 21 days, 3 x 7; for the cat it is 56 days, or eight weeks, 8 x 7; for the dog it is 63 days, or nine weeks; for humans it is 280 days or 40 weeks (Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*).

> "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"
>
> II *Peter* 1:21

I have quoted these latter figures from the work of Dr Bullinger who was contemporary with Ivan Panin. In Bullinger's book, however, many other numbers are also discussed and their significance explained. So together these two men, like two witnesses, have brought us a wealth of knowledge regarding the part which numbers and mathematics play in the revelation of the mind and purposes of God. They reveal a Supreme Being whose creation is no haphazard collection of uncoordinated bits and pieces put together to form some free-running contraption which could suddenly change or disintegrate at any time. His creation is self-evidently one which conforms to plan and design, to laws and conditions which will ensure its continuity and serve the purpose of its Creator with a mathematical precision.

That numbers and mathematics play such a vital role in the plans and purposes of God does not detract from other aspects of the Christian faith, rather it should strengthen and confirm it with this further evidence of God's omniscience. That faith is essentially concerned with the heart and spirit of mankind and his relationship with his Maker and it is a very personal matter, but one which can benefit from such additional nourishment. The Gospel of the Kingdom, which is proclaimed by this Federation, is another aspect of our faith, drawing attention to the literal fulfilment of the promises made to the Patriarchs in the BC years and fulfilled in the present day Anglo Saxon and Celtic peoples. Such fulfilment should consolidate our faith and strengthen our belief in the faithfulness of God.

But we live in a sceptical and materialistic world so it is profitable to acquire any new knowledge which becomes available to us so that we can effectively counteract the growing scepticism and unbelief with which we are faced in these last days of this age. Faith and spiritual matters are outside the realms of perhaps the majority of scientific researchers. They continually search in the material world for evidence of the origins of life, of the earth and of the whole universe. The Big Bang theory is still popular but apparently their research now unearths as many new problems as answers to old ones. The more they dig the more complexity they find.

So it was very interesting to read the following scientific item in a newspaper article earlier this year in which the author says this: "Perhaps, says a leading theoretical physicist, we do not live in a world of particles and forces at all – but of pure mathematics. Max Tegmark, professor of physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, claims that at the heart of everything are numbers. 'If you grant that space and everything in space is mathematical' he said, 'then it begins to sound less insane that everything is mathematical.'" (*Daily Telegraph*, 22 April).

Is this a glimmer of light finally dawning on the scientific world? Are scientific eyes now being opened to the truth which Bullinger and Panin discovered and proclaimed more than a century ago? I suggest we 'watch this space' with interest!

ALFRED BROWN

2014

MARY MAGDALENE AND THE BRIDEGROOM

Over the centuries, the life of Mary Magdalene has always been shrouded in mystery, yet few can deny her prominence in Scripture. In fact, when it came to the Lord's ministry on earth, she was a key figure and she maintained that position even after the Lord Jesus' Resurrection. The question then remains; why was she so prominent and why has there always been such controversy surrounding her and especially her relationship with Jesus?

Mary Magdalene, as her name suggest, was from Magdala in Galilee and in *Luke* 8:2-3 we learn that she was delivered from "*seven devils*" by Jesus and from then on followed Him diligently. There is a traditional belief that she was in fact a woman of unchaste character and over the years this image of her has been clearly imprinted in the minds of people the world over. This belief probably stems from the fact that she needed deliverance and from no less than seven demons. For a person to be in such serious bondage, her life would have had to be very sinful indeed. Her deliverance and subsequent repentance changed all of that however and she became a faithful follower of Jesus and clearly became a person of sound character. She was present at His crucifixion and in *John* 19:25 we learn that she was also present at His burial. This placed Mary Magdalene at some of the most important places and moments in human history. She was a witness to all these great events, but few can imagine the real reason for her presence in these events and the key role she had to play in them and what it meant to the world in the centuries that followed.

In the secular world, many books and even films have tried to cast doubt over the fact that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. There have been very deliberate and sinister attempts by certain secular authors and film producers to create the impression that Jesus was merely a man and it is even suggested that Mary Magdalene had a romantic interest in Jesus. Apart from the utter ludicrousness of such a thought and the fact that there is not the slightest evidence in Scripture to support such a ridiculous statement, the secular world has managed to distort the image of Mary Magdalene in the minds of many people – including the more weaker Christians amongst us. While many churches and Christians are trying to put an end to these vicious lies and accusations, a very significant truth is being overlooked by those for whom the real truth of Mary of Magdalene is intended. Careful study of the events surrounding Mary's life both before and after she met Jesus will reveal a startling revelation of who she was or, more accurately put, whom she symbolizes. Despite her long walk with Jesus and her constant presence in the events that surrounded His ministry, the truth of Mary Magdalene was only finally revealed on the day of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Photograph by Ed Skelding

In *John* 20:1-18 we learn that Mary Magdalene went down to the gravesite in the early morning only to find an empty tomb. After informing the disciples of what happened, both Peter and John went to it with Mary to see the empty tomb for themselves. After they left, Mary took another look inside and found two angels sitting there – one at the head and the other at the feet of where Jesus had laid. Many have speculated over why there were two angels, but the events that immediately followed this encounter prove that the angels were there to bear witness to a Heavenly union in the making, because as Mary turned around she saw Jesus standing behind her. Although she did not recognize Him at first, Jesus said these amazing words to her: "***Woman, why do you weep? Whom do you seek?***" These words have immense meaning if one has a look at the original Greek in which it was written. The word "woman" in this verse is "*gunḗ*," pronounced "*goo-nay*." It literally means "wife" and a further study into the root-word will reveal that apart from meaning "wife," it also means "betroth" or "to become married." Jesus in other words referred to Mary Magdalene as His wife-to-be. At this point Mary still did not recognize Jesus, but as He called out her name she suddenly and miraculously recognized Him.

Interestingly enough, the name "Mary" is derived from the Hebrew word "*Miryâm*" which means "rebellion" and "bitterness." Israel is well-known for her rebellious and disobedient attitude towards the Lord. This has led to all the bitterness that Israel had to endure during her exile and subsequent dispersion as a result of her sin and unfaithfulness to God. This is not a mere coincidence but absolutely key in understanding the symbolism of Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene is symbolic of the Heavenly Bride, Israel. The fact that she was the first person Jesus appeared to after He had risen is also very significant because, faithful to His Word, Jesus first appeared to "His

Bride to be" and through this act of love proved His devotion to His people and the priority Israel have in His heart and plan for mankind. This clearly proves the position Israel has always held in God's eyes and, as in a typical loving marriage, Israel is the number one priority of her Husband. If one really thinks about it, the Lord could have appeared to a number of people after His resurrection, including His disciples or even Pontius Pilate, to proclaim His victory over death, but instead He first appeared to Mary Magdalene.

To further add to the enormity of this event and the Divine declaration, Jesus instructed Mary not to touch Him, since He had "***not yet ascended to my Father***." At first glance, this seems to be an odd instruction since we know that Jesus shortly after his Resurrection told Thomas to put his fingers in His wounds in order for Thomas to believe. That happened before the Lord Jesus ascended to Heaven, so why does He tell Mary not to touch Him? The answer again, lies in the original Greek word for "touch" which is "*haptomai*." *Haptomai* has a far deeper meaning than to merely touch someone; it literally means "*to attach oneself*." Now suddenly it becomes clear what the Lord actually meant when He said to Mary not to touch Him. Jesus is in fact revealing to Israel that He cannot marry her just yet, but when He returns from His Father in Heaven, He will marry His Bride, who is at this stage still His "divorced" wife.

> "He must rise again from the dead"
>
> *John* 20:9

Mary Magdalene is clearly a "type" of Israel and her life symbolizes Israel in the smallest detail. It starts with her deliverance of the "seven devils," who in turn symbolize the "seven times punishment" with which Israel was inflicted. As Jesus delivered Mary of those inflictions, so He delivered Israel of her inflictions. As Mary diligently followed Jesus, so Israel did and will again follow Jesus. Her very name symbolizes Israel's rebellious attitude towards God and the bitterness it caused them, but as Mary suddenly recognized Him when Jesus called out her name, so Israel will also recognize her Bridegroom and will also be able to say: Rabboni, My Master. It is interesting to note that "Rabboni" is a word of Chaldean origin and it quite literally means "My Lord Master" or "My Godly Master" and amongst the Jews was the highest degree of honour to be bestowed on a master or teacher. Significantly, Mary Magdalene is also mentioned twelve times in the Bible – once for every tribe of Israel. This speaks volumes of the love the Lord has for His people, especially in light of global attempts by the pagan nations of the modern world to degrade the Israelite nations to second-class inhabitants of earth. Unfortunately for them, the Lord is not about to forget or forsake His beloved Bride who He will marry upon His Second Coming. This He promised us and on this we, as the Bride of Christ, will stand.

"*And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife*" (*Revelation* 21:9).

BRENTON BOSHOFF

EZEKIEL'S FORGOTTEN PROPHECY OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

There is an important prophecy that even Christians who seldom read their Bibles may have some knowledge of: the joining of the "two sticks" of Judah and Ephraim in *Ezekiel* 37:15-28. Mainstream churches downplay its significance, saying that it was fulfilled long ago. It is claimed that this rejoining took place immediately after the Babylonian captivity and that the modern Jews therefore constitute both branches of God's people. However, the Prophet Ezekiel himself refutes that interpretation in a little-discussed, almost forgotten prophecy found in chapter four, verses 4 and 5.

This prophecy states, "*Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel*."

This prophecy states that the ten tribe House of Israel, also called "Ephraim" by the prophets, would undergo a distinct and separate 390-year period of "bearing their iniquity" during which time they would therefore remain separate from Judah, who suffered only a 40-year period of punishment for their own iniquity (*Ezekiel* 4:6-8). It is therefore not possible that the two houses of Israel, Judah and Ephraim, reunited immediately after the much shorter Babylonian captivity of only 70 years.

This 390-year period indeed represented a time of punishment for the ten tribe House of Israel. Professor B E Thiering in the *American Journal of Biblical Archaeology* refers to the prophetic 390 years as a "period of wrath" (Qumran Interpretation of Ezekiel 4:5-6, AJBA-1, 1969, p.30-34). There is a parallel with other Old Testament passages. The Prophet Hosea reveals that exiled Israel was cast off into the wilderness (*Hosea* 2:14). What then is the purpose of this 390-year punishment in the wilderness? It would cause a forgetfulness of prior homeland and history, pagan rites and rituals; a veritable loss of identity in order to set the stage for a new beginning for the House of Israel. It was a period of cleansing to be purified of their pagan rites and false religion.

Dr. Daniel I Block confirms this: "But the persistent and pervasive nature of Israel's apostasy required that before Yahweh could effect the new community of faith, the evils of the past must be purged" (*Ezekiel*, p.470). This purging involved memory of land and heritage! They became lost tribes.

Some commentators believe the 390 years do not represent an exact period of Ephraim's punishment. Professor Walter Eichrodt writes, "The number of years this punishment is said to have lasted need not, of course, be taken as chronologically exact" (*Ezekiel: A Commentary*, p.84). If this is so, then why give a number? Why does Scripture use numbers at all if they do not fit the facts? Ezekiel could have simply stated that the period of wrath and punishment would be a very long time. In Scripture, God gives numbers for a reason!

Some combine the 40 years of the House of Judah's punishment and 390 years of the House of Israel's punishment, as if their history and prophecies were inseparable. The *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary* disagrees, "We must therefore, as the literal meaning of the words primarily indicates, regard the specified periods of time as periods of punishment for Israel and Judah. Since Ezekiel ... after the completion of the 390 days for Israel must lie a second time (*Ezekiel* 4:6) 40 days for Judah, he had to recline in all 430 (390 + 40) days. To include the forty days in the three hundred and ninety is contrary to the statements in the text."

The *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary* opines, "All these hypotheses, however, are shattered by the impossibility of pointing out the specified periods of time, so as to harmonize with the chronology... Still less can the 40 years of Judah be calculated, as all the determinations of the beginning and the end are mere phantoms of the air." To the contrary, it is not the fault of the prophet if a commentator has trouble understanding the prophecy!

Finally, the most significant, and perhaps widespread, view says that the Persians were friends and benevolent rescuers of the Jewish people, who sent them all home to Canaan immediately after the fall of Babylon. Historians record instead that the Persians were not liberators and that the Jews remained in bondage during the Persian era. Professor Lester Grabbe states, "...there is no reason to believe that their [Persian] rule was significantly more benign than that of their Semitic predecessors. The allusion to military conscription, forced labor, and the requisitioning of livestock, recalls...the heavy burden of taxation during the early Persian period" (*Leading Captivity Captive*, p.44).

Judeans were subject to a high and burdensome taxation system under Persia with a series of many high tributes to pay. "*Be it known now to the king that, if this city be built and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so you shall endamage the revenue of the kings*" (*Ezra* 4:13). The Persian burden was so high that Judeans mortgaged their lands and homes, and were forced to sell their children into slavery. "*Some also there were who said, 'We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards and houses, that we might buy corn because of the*

Israel wandered like a flock

dearth.' There were also who said, 'We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants. Some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already. Neither is it in our power to redeem them for other men have our lands and vineyards'" (*Nehemiah* 5:3-5). An alternate translation for "bondage" is "slavery."

This is repeated in *Nehemiah* 9:36-37, "*So here we are today, slaves. Yes, in the land you gave our ancestors, so that they could eat what it produces and enjoy its good — here we are in it, slaves! Its rich yield now goes to the kings you have set over us because of our sins. They have power over our bodies. They can do what they please to our livestock. We are in great distress!*" The Hebrew exiles were not free citizens under Persian rule, and only a small representative number returned to Canaan (*Ezra* 2:64), who were limited to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (*Ezra* 1:5; 4:1; 10:9; *Nehemiah* 4:16; 11:4, 36; 12:34).

The Prophetic Answer

The answer to Ezekiel's puzzle? God's oath as given through Ezekiel was fulfilled exactly to the year specified in prophecy! The fall of the House of Israel and its capital, Samaria, was in 721 BC, a well-attested date. Adding 390 years brings us to 331 BC. What happened in that very year? Actually, something very significant! One of the most important events in the history of the ancient world occurred on 1 October, 331 BC, with the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great at the battle of Arbela, also known as Gaugamela.

King Darius III of Persia offered Alexander half the Persian kingdom if he would sign a peace agreement, but the offer was refused. Alexander's general, Parmenion, told him, "If I were you, I would accept Darius' very generous offer." Alexander replied, "I would too if I were Parmenion!" Nothing would stand in the way of the complete and total conquest of Persia. Alexander overslept on the morning of battle, and was awakened by his concerned generals. He told them not to worry because the battle was already won. Alexander was inspired with the belief that he had a divinely ordained mission to overthrow Persia. He was correct! This conquest was indeed the event behind the divine prophecy in *Ezekiel* Chapter 4 long before.

> "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure"
>
> II *Peter* 1:10

Heaven's favour was clearly with Alexander, giving him a complete victory over a large Persian army of over 250,000 soldiers. This large Persian force was defeated by only 47,000 Greeks, who were outnumbered over 5 to 1.

With the end of the Persian Empire in 331 BC, the ten tribe House of Israel's Divine time of punishment was completed exactly 390 years after their exile from Canaan. This time-period marks the entry into the era of recorded history. Although the tribes formerly under Persian domination were now free to migrate elsewhere, there is no record of any significant migration of Israel tribes into Palestine.

So what happened to these exiled tribes? The Abrahamic covenant answers this. "*Your seed shall be as the dust of the earth. You shall spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north and to the south. In you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed*" (*Genesis* 28:14). Israel in exile was dispersed to all points of the compass, following which, in their new homelands they would become a blessing to all the earth. However, this dispersion would be somewhat haphazard and unplanned, for the exile of Israel is compared by the prophets to a "wandering." *Webster's Dictionary* appropriately describes this as "to move about without a definite destination or purpose; roam, rove, or stray; wander over the earth." Another definition is "to ramble without a definite purpose or objective." They were indeed lost!

"*Israel wandered like a flock*," says the Prophet Zechariah (10:2). The English word, "wandered" is translated from the Hebrew word, "Haggolah," which literally means, "the wandering into exile." A related Hebrew word, "Golah" means "exiles." The theme of "wandering" indicates that these exiled tribes did not retrace their path to Canaan, as Scripture foretold: "*Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths*" (*Hosea* 2:6). True to prophecy, a majority of the Israel exiles did not find their pathway back to Palestine. Where then did they go?

"*Thus shall the Israelites eat their bread unclean among the nations whither I will drive them*" (*Ezekiel* 4:13). The Israelites deported from their homeland in Canaan were to spread throughout the nations, fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant promise that they would be a blessing to all families of the earth. That they would "eat their bread unclean" indicates that over time most would lose their Israelite religious distinctiveness and become gentilized in the lands wherever they dwelled. Our book *The Story Of Celto-Saxon Israel* documents their major lands of settlement.

The Apostle Paul ratified this theme under the New (Renewed) Covenant, "*Know you therefore that they who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham...And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the* [Abrahamic] *promise*" (*Galatians* 3:7, 29). In what nations do we primarily find Christendom?

Finally, what is our obligation as heirs of the covenant promises? "*Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, you shall never fall*" (II *Peter* 1:10). Let us all be diligent in spreading the knowledge of our divine calling, and may we all be blessed in so doing! Amen.

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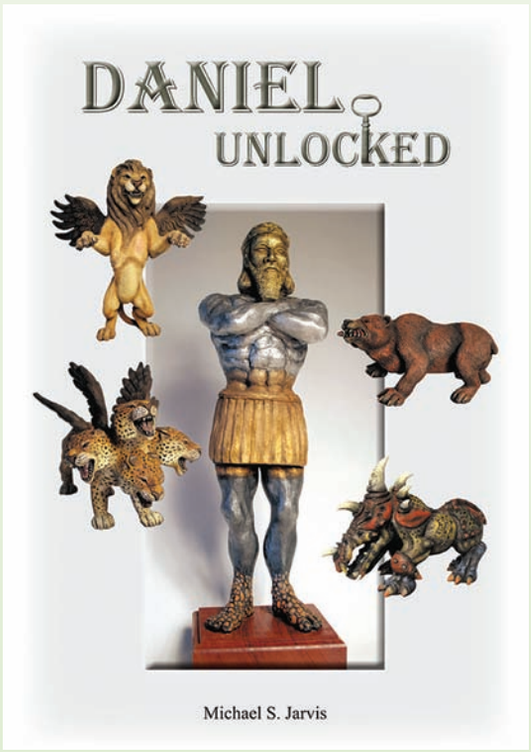

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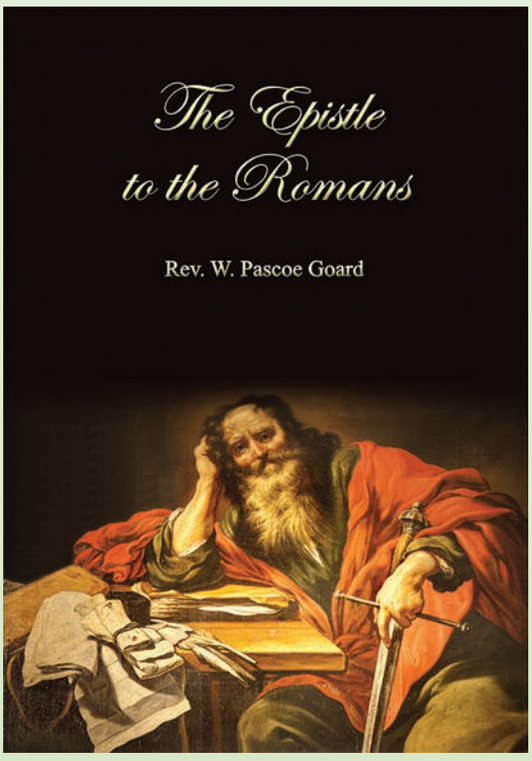

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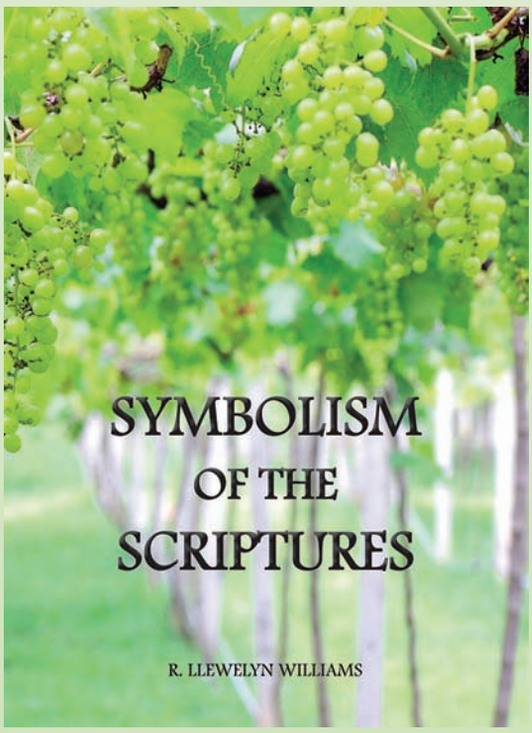

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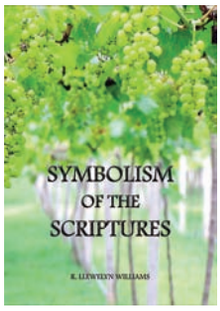

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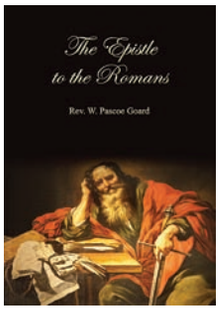

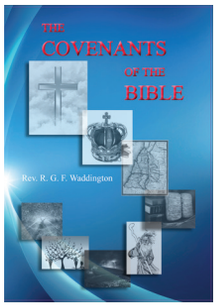

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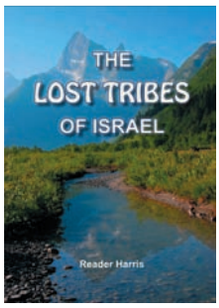

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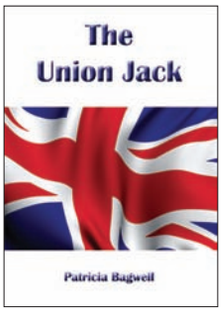

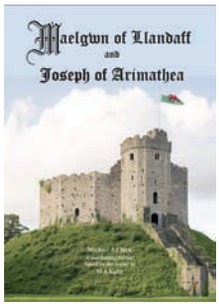

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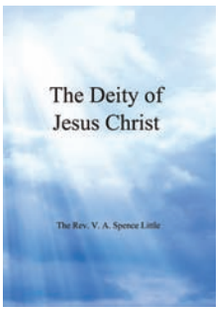

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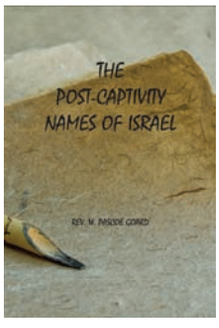

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The Covenant Publishing Co Ltd

Publishers and Booksellers – Established 1922

121 Low Etherley, Bishop Auckland, DL14 0HA, United Kingdom

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Email: admin@covpub.co.uk Web: www.covpub.co.uk

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"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest"

Luke 10:2

Published by
BIWF, 121 Low Etherley, Bishop Auckland, DL14 0HA, United Kingdom
Tel: 01388 834395
e-mail: admin@britishisrael.co.uk web: www.britishisrael.co.uk
Printed in England by printing.com